In view the facts that such amendments do not lead to concentration of power at a particular level and also do not violate democratic process.

Abolitions of Central Sales Tax

1964. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether exporters have requested for abolishing levy of Central Sales Tax imposed by the State Government on inputs required for export production under deemed exports;

(b) whether Government have examined the matter; and

(c) the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government has constituted a Technical Experts Committee to examine and make recommendations on the modalities for phasing out Central Sales Tax and the smooth implementation of VAT from 1.4.2005.

Competition in global rice market

1965. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Thailand's long-grained aromatic jasmine rice dominates the global rice market as a cheaper substitute for Basmati rice;

(b) whether Pakistan, India's rival in global rice market, is trying for concessional duty regime in the European Union; and

(c) if so, Government's plan to counter stiff competition posed by Thailand and Pakistan in global rice market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Both India and Pakistan have been enjoying a special dispensation for export of Basmati rice to European Union (EU) under Head Note 7 of the Schedule of concessions filed by EU in WTO.

(c) The Government of India is currently engaged in Article XXVIII

negotiations with the European Commission (EC) in order to arrive at a new basmati export regime for EU.

Human hair export

1966. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether holy shrine of Lord Venkateswara in Tirupati offers more than twenty thousand Kgs. of human hair for export;

(b) whether in the recent past several rabbis (Jewish Priests) issued an edict banning wigs made in India from human hair on religious grounds; and

(c) if so, whether there has been any adverse impact on the export of human hair-wigs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Yes, Sir, there is a possibility of export of 20,000 kgs. human hair from Tirupati.

(b) yes, Sir, it appears from the local Press Reports of Israel that the Jewish Rabbis of Israel have in the recent past issued edicts: banning imports of wigs made of Indian hair on religious grounds;

(c) No, Sir, this will not have any adverse impact on the export of hair from India.

Night viewing of Taj Mahal

1967. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that night viewing of Taj Mahal was discontinued two decades ago and currently entry to Taj Mahal is allowed only from sunrise till sunset;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Archaeological Survey of India has received a proposal from the Government of Uttar Pradesh seeking permission to keep the Taj Mahal open for the visitors at night for five nights a month;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) Governments reaction thereto?